1	2	3
2007-08 (Upto October, 2007)	Rice	452.57
Wheat Total		33.79
		486.36

For the Above Poverty Line (APL) category, the allocations of wheat and rice have been rationalized, w.e.f. June, 2006 and April, 2007 respectively, on the basis of monthly offtake of previous three years for all the States/Union Territories, including the State of Chhattisgarh, to make them realistic and in line with availability of wheat in the Central Pool. On request of the State Government, wheat allocation for APL category has been substituted by rice.

The State Government of Chhattisgarh has requested for increase/restoration of allocation of wheat and rice made for APL category to levels before the rationalization. In view of the uniform applicability of the policy for rationalisation to all the States and lower availability of foodgrains in Central Pool due to less procurement, the request of Chhattisgarh Government could not be acceded to. However, an adhoc/additional allocation of 6000 tonnes of APL wheat was made to Chhattisgarh for September and October, 2006 and 3104 tonnes for November and December, 2007. Further, one-time adhoc/ additional allocation of 1552 tonnes APL wheat has been made for festivals during October, 2007 for the State of Chhattisgarh.

Procurement of rice for TPDS

1990. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the exercise of procurement of rice for the Targeted Public Distribution System has become more arduoustas, the supply from Punjab and Haryana the two States that contribute seventy per cent of the stock building is almost over;

(b) if so, what innovative steps are being taken to address the situation;

(c) whether his Ministry is proposing to make good the deficit of procurement by focusing on other rice growing States such as Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and West Bengal;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMERAFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. Aquantity of 69.66 lakh tonnes of rice has been procured in Punjab in Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2007-08 as on 5.12.2007 against 71.49 lakh tonnes of rice procured in the corresponding period in previous KMS. 14.33 lakh tonnes of rice has been procured in Haryana against 16.06 lakh tonnes of rice procured in the corresponding period in previous KMS. In addition, levy rice on paddy purchased by millers is to be delivered to FCI upto 30th June, 2008.

(b) to (e) Steps taken to maximize procurement of rice in Punjab and Haryana as well as other rice growing states in KMS 2007-08 are given in Statement.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government to maximize procurement of rice in KMS 2007-08

(i) The MSP for rice was fixed at Rs. 645 and Rs. 675 per quintal for Common and Grade 'A' variety respectively for KMS 2007-08, an increase of Rs. 65 per quintal, in order to encourage farmers to grow more rice.

(ii) The Commission to Societies and Self-Help Groups undertaking procurement of paddy on behalf of the FCI/State Agencies, etc. has been allowed at a maximum of 1.5% of MSP.

(iii) The Government has announced a bonus of Rs. 100 per quintal over and above the MSP of Rs. 645 per quintal for 'Common' and Rs. 675 per quintal for Grade 'A' variety of paddy respectively.

(iv) Export of non-basmati rice below Minimum Export Price of $ 425 per MT has been banned.

(v) A notification titled "Rice (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2007 has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act 1955 on 27.11.2007. The order provides that any Company or Firm or individual which purchases paddy (in terms of rice) or rice beyond 10,000 tonnes during Kharif Marketing Season 2007-08 (October-September) shall furnish a return to the Secretary, Department of Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased. If the overall purchase of rice in the country exceeds 25,000 tonnes (in terms of rice), a return in prescribed format is to be filed with the Department of Food & Public Distribution of Central Government. The concerned State Government with which returns are filed will submit a consolidated monthly report to Central Government.

Arrival of corporates into retailing

11991. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the arrival of major corporates into retailing, particularly of fruit and vegetables and provisions, small-time retailers have been badly hit;

(b) if so, whether the arrival of majors into retailing would entail unemployment and whether Government has formulated any policy to tackle it; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) to (c) There is no restriction on the entry of the big corporate houses and other domestic investors into the retail sector. The organised retail sector would reduce the cost of intermediation on account of economies of scale benefiting consumers and producers/ farmers. It also helps in establishment of cost effective supply chains. Besides, the organised retailing sector would create more employment opportunities and improve the quality of employment in the long run. The share of organised retailing in the total retail trade is very small and it would not have any major adverse impact on retail outlets in the unorganised sector. No action seems to be necessary at present to formulate any separate policy to tackle the issue.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.